Recent Creations in London and Paris

# Dance and Dancers

AUGUST 1959

This month's full ballet guide

2s

**JOHN GILPIN and JEANETTE MINTY**

of London's Festival Ballet, in Noel Coward's *London Morning* at Festival Hall

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**Dance and Dancers**

*Editor:* PETER WILLIAMS *Associate Editor:* CLIVE BARNES
*Assistant Editor:* E. C. MASON
WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

# Graham in Perspective

WHAT is dancing all about? Sometimes we sit here and wonder. Occasionally a ballet, a dancer, a tiny fragment of choreography, even an individual step or gesture throws the whole business into perspective. We had just that experience recently, seeing the Martha Graham film " A Dancer's World " at the Academy Cinema. It's a simple film and just shows Graham making-up in her dressing room, and talking about a dancer's training. Her talk is not about technique but about spirit, a story of dedication, will-power and triumph. And most of the time you see her company in class, those wonderful thoroughbred dancers that remind you of nothing but the Bolshoi, and dance out her choreography with such heart-breaking simplicity and purity.

This is, on every level you care to name, just about the best dance film we have ever seen. The choreography, dancers and camera-work come together to make the kind of effect you always felt film-ballet could one day achieve. There has been nothing better in London's dance world this year, nothing more calculated to re-affirm one's belief in ballet as a means of communication, as an art form. It is to be hoped that it will do much to dispel the idea sometimes found in England that Graham is some kind of a crank. It is to be hoped even more that it will bring the day nearer when we shall have the pleasure of again greeting Graham and her company in London.

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## *Printing Dispute*

*Because of the dispute in the printing industry, to which the publishers are not a party and over which they have no control, this issue of*

***DANCE and DANCERS***

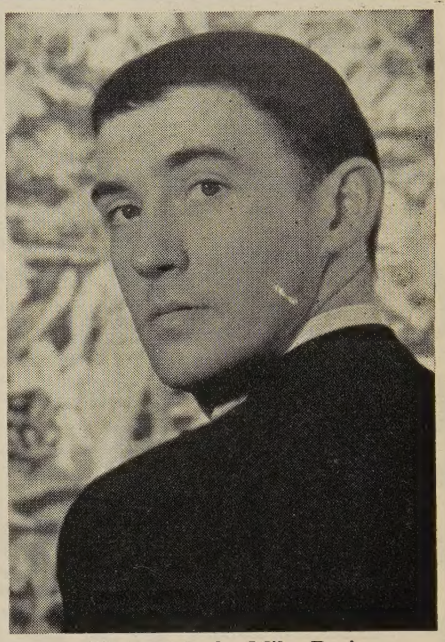
*has been produced under emergency conditions and is therefore of smaller size than usual, omitting many hitherto regular features and advertisements in order to ensure appearance. The publishers regret inconvenience to readers. Normal production will be resumed as soon as possible.*

*This issue of DANCE AND DANCERS has been printed by a T.U. house which is not in dispute with the Unions, and therefore is not involved in the printing stoppage.*

DESIGNING LONDON MORNING

NORMAN MacDowell, whose picture is on the right, is both a dancer and designer. He has danced with several companies and in musicals and was also a member of Festival Ballet in its early years. It has been in Holland that he has achieved his greatest fame as a dancer and he created the title role in Jack Carter's *The Witch Boy* there—as well as designing it. When Festival Ballet took this ballet into its repertory, mainly as a vehicle for John Gilpin, Norman MacDowell re-designed the work so that it would fit into the rather difficult dimensions of the Festival Hall stage. The work has achieved a great success wherever it has been given and the costumes in particular have come in for special praise.

The costumes below are a few of those which MacDowell has designed for the Noel Coward ballet—*London Morning*—which is the first creation of Festival Ballet's present season at Festival Hall. For this work, Coward has been responsible for the book and the music, Jack Carter for the choreography and Australian designer William Constable for the sets. The ballet concerns some goings-on near Buckingham Palace and the two centre costumes are for John Gilpin, as a sailor, and Anton Dolin, as a man in a bath-chair. The work will be reviewed in full next month.



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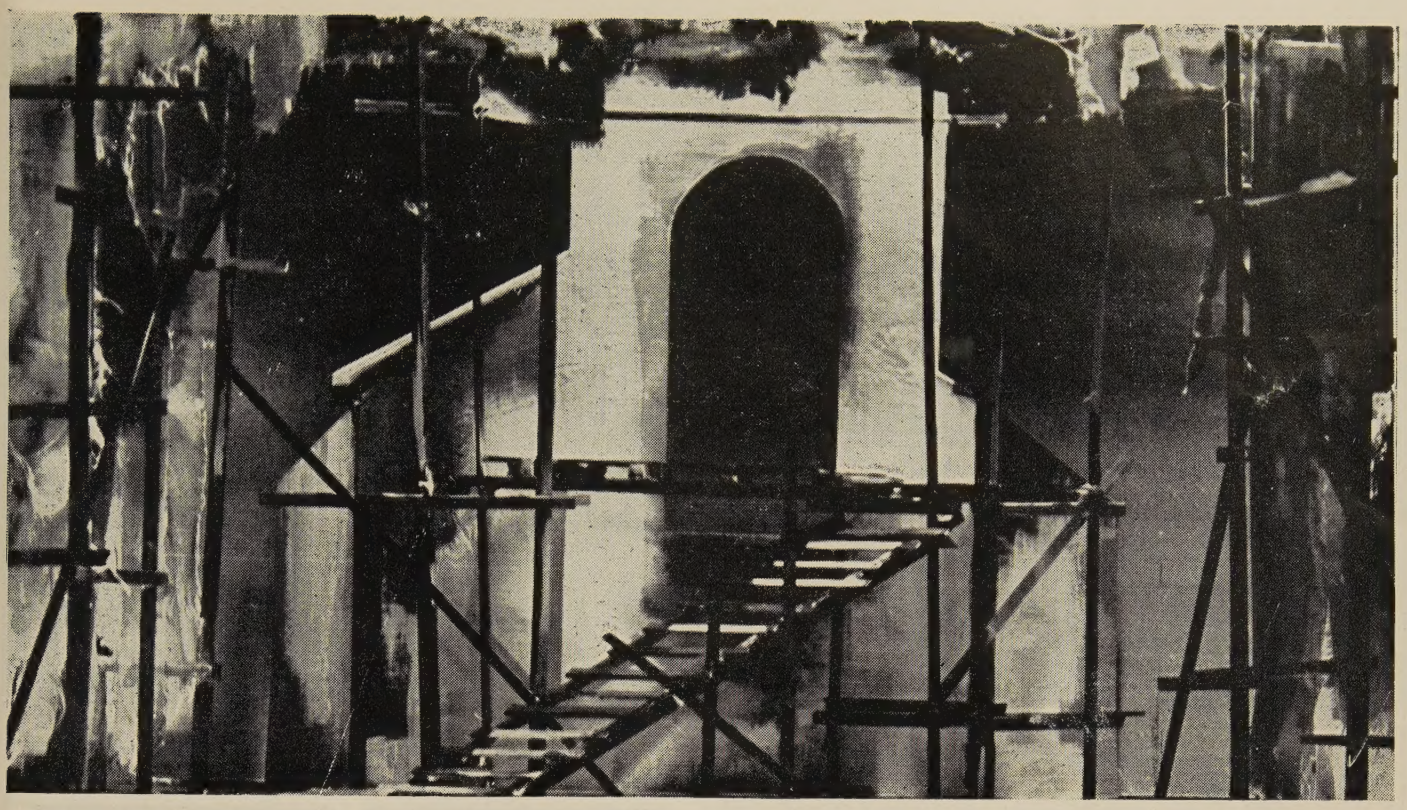


# Two Creations for Rambert

## *Hazana*

**First produced by the Ballet Rambert at Sadler's Wells Theatre on May 25, 1959. Choreography by Norman Morrice. Music by Carlos Surinach. Décor and costumes by Ralph Koltai.**

*The Husband* ..... JOHN CHESWORTH
*His Wife* ..... GILLIAN MARTLEW
*Their Daughter* ..... JUNE SANDBROOK
*Foreman* ..... CHRISTOPHER LYALL
*His Wife* ..... ANNA TRUSCOTT
*The Local Priest* ... NORMAN MORRICE
*Labourers*

### STORY

"*THE action takes place in a South American village on the eve of a local religious festival.*" Labourers have nearly completed a new village church and are resting in the sun. Only a massive stone cross remains to be placed in position. Spurred on by the local priest the men try to lift it, but it proves too heavy. However one man refuses to give in. Inspired by his small daughter, yet mocked by his fellows and his wife, he somehow single-handedly drags the huge cross up the scaffolding to get it on to its plinth. The whole ballet is simply the story of that struggle and achievement.

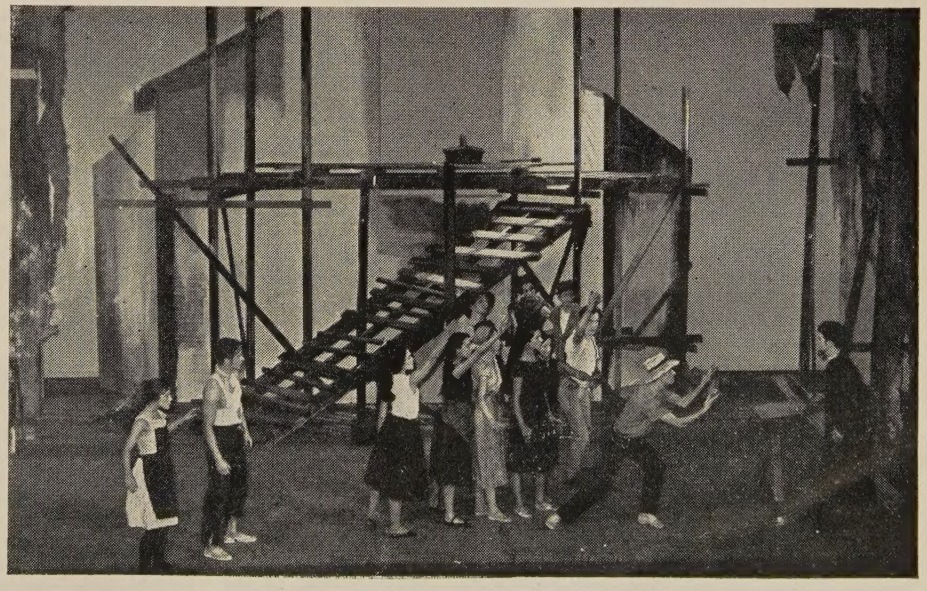
### CHOREOGRAPHY

THEY say, with less than complete accuracy, that everyone has one novel in him. Perhaps the same half-truth is equally applicable to dancers and choreographers, for I should imagine that any intelligent dancer could turn out at least one moderately *competent* ballet, and it would need only an outsize slice of luck to make it something more. But luck of this kind is like lightning, never striking twice in the same place, so it is a choreographer's second ballet, rather than his first, which is likely to be the real test of his ability and even the signpost to his future development.

Last year Norman Morrice sprang a major surprise on the dance world with the production of his remarkably mature ballet *Two Brothers*. Now comes *Hazaña* and while this may be no better than its interesting predecessor it is certainly no worse, so with these two sprightly plumes in his cap Morrice, to my mind, emerges as an important choreographic discovery.

*Hazaña* has on paper what sounds like a singularly unpromising theme for ballet. The title means simply "achievement", and its village epic seems more suitable for a short story or a film. Yet in the event Morrice has made it into a startling piece of dance theatre, a completely legitimate essay in balletic *verismo*, dramatically convincing and giving most of its spectators a sense of involvement with its characters

*DESIGN AND REALISATION: At the top of the page is Ralph Koltai's model for his setting for* Hazana. *In the picture below, the villagers are refusing to move the cross into position. Norman Morrice as the Local Priest (right); the Husband and his Daughter, played by John Chesworth and June Sandbrook, are watching on the left.* *Photo: Sonja Weiss*



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*THE MAN WITH FAITH IN TWO MOODS: Left, John Chesworth, as the Husband deflected from his purpose by his wife, Gillian Martlew. Right, Inspired by his daughter, though mocked at first by the rest of the village, the Husband manages by super-human effort to get the cross up to its rightful niche.*
*Photos: Sonja Weiss*

and action, as rare in ballet as a snowball in a hothouse.

Morrice's method in *Hazaña* — and for that matter in *Two Brothers* — is, I suspect, to work from the outside inwards. He takes his theme and his characters, fixes his music and creates his choreography from those given constants. There is not in his work any dancing for the sake of dancing, no formal breaks for passages of purely decorative cadenza. His dance style is a very adroit fusion of dancing and gesture, a simple direct language that proves ideal for a narrative ballet.

As in his earlier ballet, Morrice shows a marvellous, seemingly intuitive, understanding of the music's outline and structure. Equally important is his skilful sense of choreographic characterisation; he has the heart-catching ability of putting real people on the stage, who challenge us to believe and care. Atmosphere, theme and characters are all built up by cumulative series of incidents and dance accents woven together so that they interlock into a complete whole.

On the simple level of production Morrice's insight into human behaviour plays on the ballet like an illuminating spotlight — fragments of gesture and underplayed passages of action have such an air of truth and integrity that we find ourselves saying, with a sense of recognition: "Yes, that is what they *would* have done!" The wife smoothing water on to the brow of her sweating husband, the peasants taking bets on the hero's chances of success, only later to throw the money down in disgust — strokes such as these give the measure of Morrice's talent for the theatre.

Of course, ballet is at heart a question of dancing and, however shrewd Morrice's production proved to be, this alone does not justify many huzzahs. And curiously enough it is his very deftness with his dramatic material, that might easily obscure the astonishing vitality of his choreography and the almost unerring accuracy of his carefully wrought dance images. Earlier I mentioned his musicality, and this enables him to produce the most telling dance effects, particularly those where, Tudor-fashion, fast and slow movements are counter-pointed against one another.

The work's obvious fault is the startling abruptness of its ending, and here the ready-made score is partly to blame. Quite a few people were also apparently disturbed by the cross's seeming freedom from the strict laws of mechanics, but if your story is that guts will move mountains then this is unavoidable.

Although in *Hazaña* Morrice has neatly walked along a tightrope without toppling down into sensationalism on one side or slick symbolism on the other, at times the feat was a close thing in which luck as well as good balance played its part. He is now a choreographer to be reckoned with, and I would personally like to see him try his hand at something apart from a serious dramatic ballet — a plotless work or a comedy perhaps. It might easily flop, but the experience could, in every way, be valuable.

## DANCING

IT is a useful working rule in ballet that a good new work is almost always well danced, and this is particularly true of dramatic ballets. Certainly Morrice could have found no complaint with his cast for *Hazaña*; they were right on his side and danced magnificently.

John Chesworth and Gillian Martlew are now clearly stamped as "Morrice" dancers and gave memorable characterisations. Chesworth as the village Samson who won't give up, bore the weight of the ballet on his shoulders like the cross. Ox-like and stupid, he gave a fine picture of a non-heroic man caught up in an heroic act. Martlew, as a shabbily magnificent sex-cat of a wife, clawed her way through the ballet with wonderfully human inconstancy. As in his earlier ballet Morrice left a great deal to the acting of these two, and once again he was justified.

June Sandbrook as the child — the one totally sympathetic character — succeeded in being touching where she could easily have been merely twee, and Christopher Lyall made a virile, earthy time-cheater of a Foreman. Morrice himself seemed almost negative as the Village Priest, yet this was presumably intentional, in an attempt to make the story one of sweat and human endeavour rather than of miracles and religion.

The rest of the village stank most convincingly.

**Clive Barnes.**

## MUSIC

SELDOM have I seen a new ballet use an existing score so well. Eye and ear were constantly held by the successful blending of music and choreography, as they might be almost the product of one mind. They are used so as not merely to reflect each other's qualities but actually to enhance them. Surinach's music strikingly evokes the mood and setting of the drama, with its sultry, dusty heat, the tension of temperament within bodly languor, a sensual pride and an acquaintance with grief, as well as affording the choreographer rhythmic stimulus in great variety.

Carlos Surinach is a Spanish-born composer, now aged 44, who has lived in America since 1951. Manuel de Falla thought highly of his talent and, on this evidence, it seems quite time that we heard more of him in this country. The ballet uses music from two of his works: the *Tientos,* or "studies," commissioned by the American harpsichordist Sylvia Marlowe (who has recorded them on a Capitol disc), and the *Doppio Concertino,* composed in 1955, for a chamber orchestra of violin, piano, solo wind instruments and percussion.

Morrice has borrowed the first two of the three *Tientos* — a *Tiento de Queja,* or "Plaintive Evocation" for the prelude before

the curtain rises, and a *Tiento de Pena* ("Sorrowful Evocation") for the opening scene. They are scored for harp or harpsichord (the former is used in the ballet version), cor anglais and timpani, intended to evoke respectively the *vihuela,* or ancient Hispanic lute, a Moorish wind instrument, and the old Spanish *pandero,* a large tambourine without jingles. The *Tientos* reflect traditional patterns of Moorish-Spanish music in the long, elaborately winding solos for cor anglais, as well as a certain influence from Stravinsky in his Three Pieces for Solo Clarinet.

The *Doppio Concertino* begins at the second scene, when the Foreman rouses his team to have another shot at hoisting the Cross. Two long unaccompanied violin cadenzas in the course of the work have a singular effect in screwing up the tension between anger and determination, and a strident trumpet makes you feel the physical pain of the Husband's effort in manhandling the Cross. I admired very much the way Morrice turns even the sharp breaks in the music to good account, simply by "freezing" the dancers at a sudden, arresting gesture or *attitude,* so that you are forced into wondering what may follow.

The ending of the ballet seemed much too abrupt after the preceding excitement, as though the music ran out too quickly. At the second performance, four repeats of the final chord were added. These helped considerably to sustain the moment of achievement so that we, the watchers, could share in it, although I think Morrice might still reconsider his timing of the last climactic two minutes. It is a none too easy score to point and balance accurately, but to my ears the orchestra under David Ellenberg had the measure of it, with the contrast of solo instruments and the rhythm capably maintained.

**Noël Goodwin.**

## DÉCOR

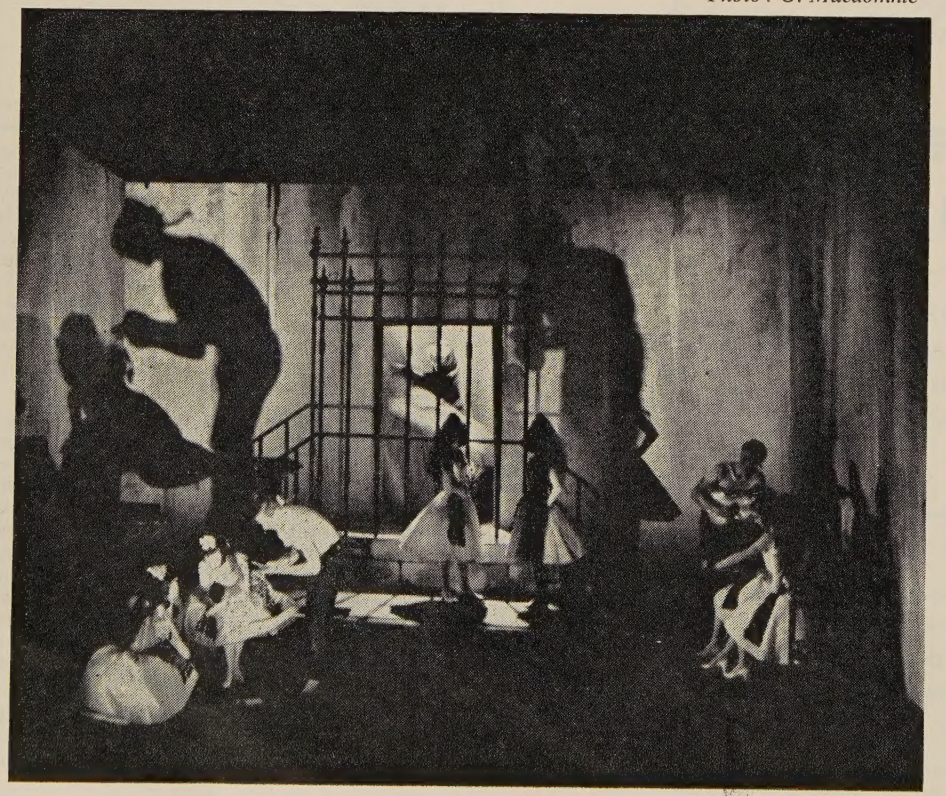
FROM a designing point of view, *Hazana* presents many problems. The whole crux of the work is that the Husband should get the cross on to a higher level. Therefore it would seem that some strong and practical ramp and rostrum is absolutely essential. Now, pieces of scenery that have to be constructed are not always easy to incorporate into a ballet design—firstly they have to be completely integrated into the design as a whole, secondly they have still to leave room on the floor for dancing. The solution lay in a constructivist approach to the whole work, something between what Iakouloff achieved for *Le Pas d'Acier* and what Bérard did for *La Rencontre.* The former, as I remember it, was the very essence of Soviet constructivism with its rostrums and pieces of machinery more or less in the raw representing the age of steel. The latter was a far more poetic attitude towards the whole situation of the meeting between Oedipus and the Sphinx. Bérard saw the Sphinx's hide-out as a circus-like construction — steel bars mixed with red plush and gold fringe — seen against a cyclorama. It was a mysterious place which was just right for a fabulous creature and also modern enough to match up with the contemporary nature of Sauguet's score.

Ralph Koltai has worked his construction into a more realistic background. Admittedly his wings, made of old bits of sacking hung on the bare skeleton of the wing frames, are a form of constructivism but his unfinished church which forms the background, and through which can be seen the deep blue sky, is more conventional and seemed to me to be the least successful element in his designing and hardly tied up with his wings. This fault caused the setting to lack a certain sense of unity. It may have been, of course, that this was something deliberate on the part of Koltai so as to lay emphasis on the permanence of the church in an environment of poverty and uncertainty and it is certainly true that the church has had a very special place in small impoverished Latin communities. It is always a mistake to suppose symbolism when none was intended, but this is the only reason I can see for what appeared to me to show a slight imperfection of artistic unity. It would also be a mistake to lay too much emphasis on this fault because the setting was full of atmosphere and most admirably captured the insupportable heat of high noon, the dust and disintegration that can turn men's brains to acts of stupidity. It also had the sense of realism which was obviously necessary in a work of this kind and this realism was carried through in the costumes which I find impossible to remember individually. This was right because one seldom remembers details of the clothes of tattered nondescript people and any attempt at deliberate 'designing' would have completely destroyed all that had been achieved in the setting. They were the sort of clothes in which people lived, made love and died; they were also possibly stinking and flea-ridden — or rather that was the impression they gave. Their colours were dusty and earthy and they seemed as though they grew out of the setting. The only determined costume was that of the Local Priest which made a black silhouette against the sun-baked ochres and rust.

After having seen more of Koltai's first ballet décor — for Morrice's *Two Brothers* — I am of the opinion that he has made an important contribution to British ballet design. Our ballets have needed someone with his direct, realistic approach to a certain type of dramatic work. An approach that is at the same time essentially one of the painter who also has a decided sense of theatre. For this we have had to wait a long time.

**Peter Williams.**

*PREPARATION: The opening moment of* La Reja *with cavaliers and dancers preparing for the occasion.* *Photo: G. Macdomnic*



# *La Reja*

**First performed by the Ballet Rambert at Sadler's Wells Theatre on June 1, 1959. Choreography by John Cranko. Music by Scarlatti. Décor and costumes by Carl Toms.**

CAST

*The Girl in Pink* ..... LUCETTE ALDOUS
*The Girl in Red* .... GILLIAN MARTLEW
*The Girl in Black* ..... BERYL GOLDWYN
*Their Cavaliers* ..... JOHN CHESWORTH, KENNETH BANNERMAN, CHRISTOPHER LYALL
*The Crone* ..... VALERIE MARSH
*Aristocrats* and *Dancers*

THE scene is a Spanish courtyard in the 17th or 18th century Spain. A group of decaying aristocrats — masked and dressed sinisterly in black — enter and are greeted by a red-wigged Crone. The Crone produces a dancing troupe to entertain the visitors. The Dancers emerge from behind a grille (*la reja*) and some of the men try unsuccessfully to flirt with them.

After the performance is over and the Aristocrats have left, one of the party returns to get another glimpse of his favourite dancer. He is shooed away by the Crone as the ballet ends.

## CHOREOGRAPHY

JOHN CRANKO'S new ballet *La Reja* is perhaps its own worst enemy. Intended as a divertissement set around by a theme, the setting itself is so lustrous that the

*DANCING FOR THE DECAYING ARISTOCRATS: Watched by masked and black-cloaked figures the dancers perform a lively divertissement. Photo: G. Macdomnic*

jewels of the divertissements look somewhat dull and opaque by comparison. My first impression of this ballet was that it seemed excellent before they started to dance, and this view I have already expressed in a "first-night" notice written elsewhere. My second impression was rather more favourable, and I was able to see quite a lot in the actual dancing that I originally missed.

Cranko's theme offers singularly good opportunities for choreography, and these he has, with the great assistance of his designer, made good use of. As an evocation of a period it is beautifully realised; the gallantly decaying figures of the Aristocrats throw monstrous shadows on the walls and the insidious spirit of corruption steals through the ballet giving sinister overtones to even the twangling brightness of the music. As a suggestion of the Spain of the Hapsburgs, the Spain of Goya and the Neapolitan influences of Longhi, Cranko and his designer do not put a foot wrong, but after this build up the dancing itself comes almost as a disappointment. For Cranko appears to have seen the Spanish dance idiom through the eyes of Petipa, and these ceremonial dances have no more sense of period rightness than does the Spanish Dance in *Swan Lake* — in fact, choreographically there seems a good deal in common between the two. When I first saw the ballet this worried me a good deal, and I was also depressed by the over-slick ending, which looked reminiscent of nothing less than *Graduation Ball*. The ballet's prologue had led me to expect a far more dramatic series of divertissements, showing much the same feeling for time and place as did the opening.

Even at first glance it was quite clear that Cranko had done his work with considerable assurance and ingenuity. He had deployed his forces of three principal dancers and their three cavaliers, together with a *corps de ballet* of six girls with wonderful variety, and was never at a loss for a telling group and visually expressive pose. In fact, throughout the ballet its static moments proved unusually satisfying.

I was struck at first by the fact that Cranko had overcrowded his stage, and this impression remained with me when I saw the ballet later, but subsequently I was far less concerned with the conventional nature of the choerographic idiom. The ballet's beginning seemed to imply a "genre" work, and I had been thinking of the choreography in those terms. Later it occurred to me that this was much more in the way of a Balanchine divertissement, in which form is far more important than content.

The groupings and group formations are unusually fluent and vivid, imaginatively linked together and each individual dance, discreetly varied from the next in structure and mood, if not in style, had a happy air of completeness, as if it had been created in one swift pounce of the choreographer's imagination. The style itself, with its conventional back-bends and monotonously pseudo-Spanish arm-movements, quite definitely palled, and the foot stamping, a kind of primitive classical *zapateado*, seemed a mistake set to such chaste music. Yet there remained a lot to admire in the delicate traceries of the choreographic structure, which with its convolutions and intricacies reminded one of Spanish lace or, perhaps even more, the elaborately wrought ironwork of which the Spaniards are such masters.

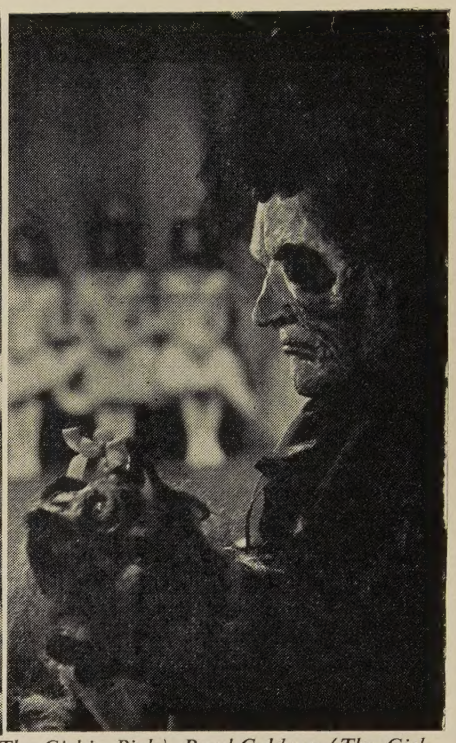
Details of the ballet's background are also unusually felicitous; the old aristocrat, with her repulsive lap-dog, who nods off to sleep during the performance (could Cranko here have been thinking of *ballet's* audience, and the shallow public response to art), or again the girl who, despite the jealous chaperoning of the Crone, gets a rose from her admirer and re-appears with it pinned to her bodice

In total this is a somewhat disappointing ballet which fails to live up to the expectations it continually seems to hold out. Yet it is undoubtedly a ballet which grows on the spectator, a ballet of very considerable originality, finding its inspiration, perfectly validly, from painting, perhaps literature, and most markedly from the choreographer's unusually rich imagination.

## DANCING

AT its first performance the ballet wore an air of hasty improvisation and sheer under-rehearsal. It is probably a considerable strain on the Ballet Rambert to produce two new ballets within a week of one another, and one of them is almost bound to suffer. A couple of performances later the work was in far better shape and nearly all of its rough corners smoothed down. The three principal dancers all did well in agreeably contrasted rôles. Lucette Aldous — a remarkably improved dancer — was perhaps outstanding as the gay and uninhibited Girl in Pink. The more soulful dancing of Beryl Goldwyn, with its soft phrases and drooping languors, also came over well, while Gillian Martlew, haughty, proud and enormously aware of her feminine wiles, danced excellently and brought a secretive seductiveness to the ballet.

The three boys at no time looked particu-



*THE WATCHED AND THE WATCHERS: Left, the three principal dancers—Gillian Martlew (The Girl in Pink), Beryl Goldwyn (The Girl in Black) and Lucette Aldous (The Girl in Pink)—watched by a decayed noblewoman and her dog, on the right. Below, Gillian Martlew with the* corps de ballet *in one of the divertissements.* *Photos: G. Macdomnic*

larly happy in their parts. Cranko had made no attempt to clothe their rôles in any characterisation and they seemed merely naked and ashamed. The anonymous *corps de ballet* of six girls were perfectly competent.

Where the ballet gained a lot was from the performances of the mimed bystanders, who stood around with a complete lack of self-consciousness, and did all these tiny but important parts really well. In fact it was possibly this that threw the ballet out of the balance Cranko originally intended. Valerie Marsh made a finely convincing decrepit cripple as the Crone, and the portrayals given by the whole party of Aristocrats appeared to have been equally carefully thought out.

**Clive Barnes.**

## MUSIC

CRANKO'S choice of solo harpsichord sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) for *La Reja* was a bold and intriguing idea, if not entirely successful in its effect. In style and idiom the music is more apt than you might imagine. Scarlatti, although a Neapolitan by birth spent the last 28 years of his life in Spain as music-master to Queen Maria Barbara, for whom nearly all the 550-odd keyboard sonatas were written. Moreover, a large number of them are, in essence, reflections in a courtly musical mirror of Spanish life and character, even to the use of colourful effects derived from street cries, popular dances, church bells and the like — quite as evocative of the locale and period as anything by Falla or Albéniz.

The *pas de deux* with the Girl in Black, for example, near the end of the ballet, is accompanied by music of real *flamenco* character, with the melody punctuated by chords and cross-accents suggestive of shouts and stamping feet. Shrill pipes of village bands are evoked in another piece; elsewhere the fountains of the Royal Palace at Aranjuez or some other scenic effect, but all are distilled through Scarlatti's purely musical conception.

Ten sonatas, selected with the advice of Joan Barker, the soloist, are strung together to provide a satisfying key-sequence as well as appropriate rhythmic character. In performing order, they are listed here for reference. The numbers used are those of the new catalogue compiled by Ralph Kirkpatrick, which supersedes the old Longo index: Kk. 380 in E; 124 in G; 377 in B minor; 447 in F-sharp minor; 208 in A; 20 in E; 132 in C; 519 in F minor; 193 in E-flat; 450 in G minor, with the concluding promenade a repeat of part of the first E major Sonata.

The drawback to the use of this music played on a solo harpsichord is that the instrument is not by itself sufficiently assertive to produce a theatrical effect on the ear at the same level as the stage spectacle meets the eye. The harpsichord can entertain a large roomful of people, but in a theatre its essentially intimate character is lost. It is not a question of variety of tone, for the harpsichord has much more of this than a piano, but of magnifying to the theatrical oversize the subtlety of expression in the music. Admirably as Miss Barker played, I could not but think that this was an occasion when the purists could be outraged to good purpose by having the music orchestrated. Better still would be a partial orchestration, retaining the solo instrument for contrast in three or four of the dances (but never, never using a piano).

**Noël Goodwin.**

***The article on the decor for* La Reja *will be found on page 18***

*TEACHERS IN NEW YORK : At a party given in honour of Vera Volkova (one from left) at American Ballet Centre. Left is Margaret Craske, assistant director of Metropolitan Opera Ballet School. Right of Volkova, who is Artistic Director of the Royal Danish Ballet and in America to give classes, is Robert Joffrey (Director of American Ballet Centre) and Valentina Pereyslavec (of Ballet Theatre School).*
*Photo : Martha Swope.*

*HELSINKI RENDEZVOUS : At a party to open the Ballet Festival at the Finnish Opera are : Doris Laine (ballerina of the Helsinki Opera), Bryan Ashridge and Svetlana Beriosova (guest artistes from the Royal Ballet), R. H. Oittinen (Chairman), Liane Daydé (guest artist from the Paris Opéra), French Ambassador Géraud Jouve, Lisa Taxell, Margaret von Bahr. Photo : Taisto Tuomi.*

# curtain up!

DAME MARGOT FONTEYN seems to hit the headlines more frequently than any ballerina since the days of Lola Montez — if in fact you could call that notorious lady a ballerina at all, or if in those days they had such things as headlines. All within a few days Dame Margot was made a Doctor of Music by Oxford University, re-united to her husband Dr. Roberto de Arias and announced that she was virtually no longer a member of the Royal Ballet.

The latter is not so alarming as it sounds because she is to become a guest ballerina with the Royal Ballet — something which, in fact, she has been for some time. This will give her more chance of appearing with other companies and in other countries around the world. It probably will give her more chance of spending more time with her husband with whom everyone is happy to know that she has been re-united. After he was allowed a safe passage from the Brazilian Embassy in Panama where he has been virtually a prisoner since the incident reported in this magazine and elsewhere two months ago, he flew to Rio de Janiero and was at the airport to meet Dame Margot who had flown in from London.

*BELINDA WRIGHT with her 15 month old son, Christopher. Wright and her husband, Wolfgang Brunner, have been working in Switzerland and she recently returned to England to dance in a Royal Command Variety performance in the North.* *Photo : Kurt Wyss.*

PHILIP CHATFIELD'S last appearance with the Royal Ballet was not a dancing one—it was cutting a cake. The evening before he left for New Zealand to join his wife, Rowena Jackson, where both are taking up residence, also marked the end of the Royal Ballet's Covent Garden season. It has become a tradition, started by Cyril Beaumont a few years ago, that a cake, made from a recipe for a seed cake used by Marie Taglioni, should be cut and eaten by the company at the end of its season. This year it was a nice gesture to give Chatfield the honour of cutting it, especially as during his years with the Royal Ballet he has been such a valuable member of the company.

MARIE RAMBERT got quite a welcome when she arrived in America in advance of her company who are appearing at Jacob's Pillow this year. She was met at the airport by Antony Tudor, Anatole Chujoy, P. W. Manchester and Arthur Todd. Tudor was of course one of the earliest of the choreographers whom Rambert developed; Chujoy is the editor of *Dance News* and Miss Manchester (known to everyone as "Bill") is also an editor of that newspaper and was at one time a secretary to Ballet Rambert. Arthur Todd, our own American correspondent, later took Rambert to dinner with Martha Graham at the Oak Room of the famous Plaza Hotel. On another day Martha Graham gave an enormous cocktail party for Rambert.

ROY ROUND has done much photography for *Dance and Dancers* and has also photographed some of the most beautiful girls in the world. On June 22, he married one of the most beautiful girls in the Royal Ballet — Georgina Parkinson. On the same day two other Royal Ballet dancers married each other — Michael Boulton and Margaret Hill. He proposed to her while he was touring Australia with the Royal Ballet and they decided to get married as soon as the season of both companies were over. There is a rumour that Mrs. Boulton, one of the finest artists in the Royal Ballet, may take over the role of Carabosse in *The Sleeping Beauty*. A role not danced in this country by a woman since Carlotta Brianza, the original Aurora, appeared in the part during Diaghilev's famous 1921 production.

## happy birthday to...

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | August |
| Roy Tobias | New York City Ballet | 22 |
| Meriel Evans | The Royal Ballet | 25 |
| John O'Brien | Ballet Rambert | 29 |
| | | September |
| Audrey Farriss | The Royal Ballet | 1 |
| Teresa Mann | Canadian National Ballet | 2 |
| Yvonne Mounsey | New York City Ballet | 2 |
| Anne Morrell | London's Festival Ballet | 3 |
| Sylvia Mason | Canadian National Ballet | 5 |
| Esteban Cerda | Stora Teatern, Gottenburg | 5 |
| Errol Addison | Royal Ballet organisation | 8 |
| Judith Colpman | Canadian National Ballet | 9 |
| Noreen Sopwith | The Royal Ballet | 10 |
| Norman Morrice | Ballet Rambert | 10 |
| Andrina Miller | American Ballet Theatre | 11 |
| Lizzie Rode | Royal Danish Ballet | 12 |
| Vassilie Trunoff | London's Festival Ballet | 14 |
| Peter Darrell | Western Theatre Ballet | 16 |
| Catherine Carr | Canadian National Ballet | 16 |
| Liubov Tchernicheva | | 17 |
| Frederick Ashton | The Royal Ballet | 17 |
| David Poole | Teaching in South Africa | 17 |
| Geoffrey Davidson | London's Festival Ballet | 18 |
| Sally Bayley | Canadian National Ballet | 18 |
| Michael Somes | The Royal Ballet | 22 |
| Svetlana Beriosova | The Royal Ballet | 24 |

*CHAGALL DESIGNS GREEK PASTORAL LOVE STORY: Above and below are two of the settings which the famous painter Marc Chagall designed for the new production of Ravel's* Daphnis and Chloe *at the Paris Opera.* *Photos: Lido*

PARIS

# Daphnis and Chloe

**A new production presented at the Paris Opéra on 3 June, 1959 in homage to the memory of Serge Diaghilev. Originally created by Fokine. Music by Maurice Ravel. Décors and costumes by Chagall. Choreography: George Skibine.**

*Chloë* ..... CLAUDE BESSY
*Daphnis* ..... GEORGE SKIBINE
*Lykanion* ..... JACQUELINE RAYET
*Bryaxis* ..... MAX BOZZONI
*Dorkon* ..... MICHEL DESCOMBEY
and *Corps de ballet.*

THIS production which should originally have been staged last year in homage to Ravel has just been given at the Opéra in commemoration of Diaghilev's arrival in Paris 50 years ago. In the meantime, the choreographer and the principal dancer have changed. Serge Lifar directed the production which was mounted in a great hurry for the Exposition de Bruxelles on July 8, 1958, with Peter Van Dijk. This time George Skibine undertakes both tasks.

It was at the Théâtre du Châtelet that Fokine created for Karsavina and Nijinsky what has since become one of his favourite works. Around this time relations between him and Diaghilev had become somewhat strained and the creation of *L'Après-midi d'un faune*, the cause of the friction, delayed the opening of the Ravel work, which was finally given on 8 June, 1912 at the end of the season. Jacques Rouché, however, having enjoyed it, asked Fokine's permission to add it to the repertoire of the Opéra in 1921. 13 years later, Lifar, with Suzanne Lorcia, gave a beautifully plastic interpretation of the young shepherd. Subsequently he was succeeded very briefly by Michel Renault, with Madeleine Lafon, before the work was dropped from the repertoire.

Skibine has now given the work a new interpretation, although it is certainly not one of which Diaghilev would have approved. Renowned as a man of the theatre, Diaghilev's principal concern was with the unity of a work and he knew at a glance how to harmonise the different elements. It is to him that we owe such masterpieces as *Petrushka, Scheherazade* and *The Good-Humoured Ladies*. No similar attempt at unity has been made here. Consequently this new version lacks verve and clarity as the participants have not succeeded in combining their talents or in sticking firmly to the subject.

Thus the great triumph of the piece is Ravel's. He alone knew how to depict this charming idyll poetically, how to make fun of the clumsy Dorkon, how to evoke the frenzied apprehensions, the panics, and the bacchanale. What counterpoint have Skibine and Chagall achieved in bringing to this wonderfully descriptive symphony?

Chagall, normally a studio painter, has designed in the fantastic style peculiar to him, four luminous canvasses in which the blues, greens and reds seem to sing out.

*THE PROTAGONISTS: George Skibine, as Daphnis, with Claude Bessy, as Chloe, in two moments from the love passages which are threaded into Skibine's new version of a work originally created by Michel Fokine.* *Photos: Lido*

From his palette a whole new world springs to life. It is a world of strange and magical images — a drowning cypress, a celestial fish, a blood-drenched sun — but, apart from the shadow of a temple and two lovers intertwined on a cloud — there is nothing which really suggests Daphnis and Chloë. His wonderfully commanding pictures have a movement of their own, but one which does not willingly tolerate the movements of the dancers, who are superbly dwarfed and obliterated by them. The costumes, apart from those for the two lovers, are incongruous: that for the God Pan being particularly ridiculous.

Skibine's version is slightly influenced by Fokine's from which he has paraphrased certain *ensembles* and *variations*. He replaces the shepherd's crook usually carried by Daphnis with a scarf which looks rather effeminate. His scene for the pirates, the too static bacchanale, and his timid and uninteresting mass movements come nowhere near those created by Fokine. But, though he doesn't follow the score very closely, he has succeeded in creating here and there some beautifully passionate *adages*, which he himself dances sensitively with Claude Bessy. She is a very beautiful Chloë, but too cheerful and sure of herself for the rôle. Jacqueline Rayet, a young and graceful Lykanion, shows more subtlety, yet the choreography has little to offer her. Max Bozzoni and Michel Descombey stand out from the *corps de ballet*.

Ravel's work should certainly stay in the Opéra's repertoire, but perhaps it would have been preferable to stick to the Bakst/Fokine version, despite its age, as has been done in other cases, notably *Scheherazade*. This would show due respect for their work and prove the ballet's worth.

**Marie-Françoise Christout.**

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**NEW YORK**

# City Center will move to Lincoln Center?

THE most provocative news at the moment in America, at least as far as both domestic and international dance are concerned, is the fact that the New York City Center of Music and Drama is negotiating to move its entire operation into the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in 1963.

This means that the New York City Center's ballet (New York City Ballet), light opera, drama and revivals of Broadway musicals might be the amalgamated group of theatre arts that would become the official resident company of this major center in New York. It is also likely that if this occurs then this over-all management will be responsible for the formation of Lincoln Center's proposed repertory dance company.

The project was announced by New York City's Mayor Wagner while extolling the city's cultural advantages to an international convention in Madison Square Gardens. He said that, "Lincoln Center will be the home of the Metropolitan Opera, the Philharmonic Symphony and the City Center". Later his office announced that the positiveness of this statement was a "typographical mistake". According to Edgar B. Young, secretary of Lincoln Center, there have been "no conclusions, no committments". However, Morton Baum, chairman of City Center finance committee, who has been in negotiation with Lincoln Center for seven months, has already announced two points of agreement between the interested parties: "They are that under no circumstances should we change our price policy of $3.90 top (approximately 28 shillings) and that there should be a minimum of 2,500 seats". Baum also said that he felt that the present composition of City Center should be a part of Lincoln Center for though City Center was under no compulsion to move from its present premises he felt that his organisation had much to contribute to the new center.

Just how the great international dance organizations, such as the Royal Ballet, the Bolshoi Ballet or the Royal Danish Ballet could fit into all this is at the moment uncertain. It seems doubtful whether any of these companies could appear in New York at the popular prices suggested in Morton Baum's negotiations. It may be that, as in the past, such noted dance groups would be more likely to appear at the new Metropolitan Opera House which will replace the present Met., due for demolition. This is one of the many questions that has still to be answered. At any event, a lively debate is already under way in the American dance field as to the all-over policy of the Lincoln Center Dance Theatre and, since it is not due to be put into operation for four years, there is still ample time for differences to be straightened out. But it does seem that at last New York is on its way to getting a permanent home for the dance such as is enjoyed in London, Paris, Copenhagen and in the cities of Russia.

Meanwhile, *Dance and Dancers* is planning an authoritative survey of all the major elements concerned, with special emphasis on the position of major foreign dance companies that regularly visit New York. These findings will be published in a series of articles during the coming autumn.

**Arthur Todd.**

*VALENCIENNE WEDDING: Jose Greco and Lola de Ronda in* Serenata y Boda, *one of the many numbers in the programme given during the Princes Theatre season.*

**IBERIA IN LONDON : 3**

# Spain via Italy and America

**After Carmen Amaya, Pilar Lopez and Susana and Jose, the fourth Spanish company to come to London in the summer of 1959 was that of Jose Greco. His season at Princes Theatre, opening on June 1st, was also his third London season.**

## by PETER WILLIAMS

"HOW can one analyse an artist such as José Greco?", starts off the programme note. How indeed! For Greco is one of the Spanish dance's problem children whose attitude to the dance has changed over the years that I have known him, taking on the colour of whichever country he happens to be playing. As he has not worked in Spain for some time it is perhaps not unnatural, taking the chameleon characteristic into consideration, that the true Spanish colour has become rather dimmed in the brightness of the rainbow.

That José Greco is Italian is no secret. Born in the Abruzzi mountains, he moved to Seville with his family at the age of seven. It was here that as a young boy with decided artistic leanings he developed a passion for Spanish dance. This passion never left him but became even stronger when his family moved on to America where he studied to become a painter and also to take dancing lessons on the side. At an early age therefore, and at the most impressionable age at that, Greco had become closely associated with three countries and this fact should be taken into consideration when trying to analyse his art. Because to this day he has retained decided characteristics of each of these countries.

In 1938, Greco was seen by Argentinita in New York and she saw in him certain potentiality; two years later he became her partner and remained with her company until she died in 1945. For three years after that he danced with Argentinita's sister, Pilar Lopez. It was shortly after he had left Pilar to form his own company that I first saw him in Copenhagen. Though I was not very impressed with some of the numbers he gave, and it was not until later that I discovered them to be but feeble copies of what Argentinita created, I was impressed by Greco himself and his three principal dancers — Nila Amparo his first wife, Luis Olivares and with Carola Goya for her castanet playing. Shortly after this these four artists came to Covent Garden for a lecture demonstration, then in 1951 Greco's company made its first public appearance in England, at the Sadler's Wells Theatre. The latter was a very decided improvement on the Copenhagen appearances, the company was more of an entity and an attempt was made to create original works of which a version of *Carmen* was notably good.

Greco at this time was still under the direct influence of Spain and of the Lopez sisters. He had an arresting appearance with his finely chiselled features, splendid physique and great power in the lower half of his body. From the waist upwards he was not very eloquent but he always gave the impression of forceful masculinity. As a dancer he was always at his best in numbers like the *farrucca* which mainly relied on speed in footwork.

Shortly after the Wells season, Greco left for America with his company and for several years they toured the length and breadth of that continent with enormous success. At the same time they also acquired certain characteristics of typical American showmanship which became apparent by the time the company returned to London, to Festival Hall, at Christmas two years ago. It was a 'show' that was slick as all-get-out and the worst feature of it was that Greco had got himself a wardrobe of shiny Lastex pants in various colours. Had Argentinita's one-time partner now become the 'Liberace' of the Spanish dance? It seemed so.

What Greco brought to Princes Theatre, for a month-long season, on June 1 did not vary greatly from his previous offering at Festival Hall and for those who like a lot of speed and clatter regardless of at what cost, it all added up to a very good show for the family. But I doubt if serious lovers of Iberian art would have quite the same feelings about their money's worth. There is no doubt but that Greco can put on a show but it seems a pity that having gone to so much trouble he does not present something that might enhance the art of the country he adopted. Scena followed scena with titles like 'Los Trovatores', 'Fiesta de Crepusculo' and 'Serenata y Boda' which involved a number of what used to be called 'Speciality acts', a little singing, some *corps* work a great deal of *palmas* and *zapateado* and very little sense. I missed any attempts at construction or ideas both of which Greco once had decided leanings towards. His version of Argentinita's *Madrid* 1890 lacked any feeling of *zarzuela* style and therefore lacked point and just became commonplace. By far his best number is still *El Cortijo* for four horsemen.

But if the form of the presentation had not altered much there seemed to be some new faces and promotions amongst the dancers. Greco himself cannot but help presenting a striking and dominating personality on stage but much of his work today is very mechanical. With most Spanish artists I get the impression that each performance has been devised especially for me — and you : with Greco I feel that he has been doing the same thing every night for the last heaven alone knows how long and that is all completely impersonal. This is a pity because he still achieves remarkable technical perfection particularly in his footwork. It would appear, from the programme, that he performs a wide range of dances, yet apart from *Montanesas de Castilla* (originally called *La Largarterana* when he danced it with Argentinita and Pilar Lopez), everything he does appears to be identical. His range of coloured Lastex pants is more limited in colour than it was the last time he appeared in London but I still wish he would stick to the less glittering and more dignified form of lower anatomy covering.

Greco's present wife and professional partner is Lola De Ronda. She also is a very smart dresser appearing first in a slinky black flounced dress with large jade earrings and jade linings to her flounces. When she and Greco dance together it all looks

like a well got-up cabaret act. She has a gorgeous figure and a beautiful but rather expressionless face. Actually most of what she does is extremely ladylike, almost genteel and one longs for something to shatter that icy calm. However this quality is admirably suited to her *Maja de Cordoba* and somehow it seemed rather typical that the word 'Maja' (lady) should have been added to the title of this famous Albeniz music which will always be associated with Antonia Merce (La Argentina). In fact Lola de Ronda wears the white dress covered with fine black lace that almost appeared to be a copy of what Argentina used to wear. In this she dances with dignity and style and performs some beautiful turns with back-bends. Had she shown more fire in other numbers this would have been far more effective as a contrast, as it was it brought a sudden sense of style to a programme that up to that point had rather lacked it.

New to this company but not new to London was the other principal dancer — Teresa. Those who remember the first season of Carmen Amaya at Princes Theatre will never forget the impression that Teresa made with her partner, and first husband, Luisillo. They made a perfect couple and their dances were love passages — like the courting of wild animals or birds. After they left Amaya they formed their own company, then when their marriage broke up so did their professional partnership. Teresa settled down to happy married life with her second husband in New York and Luisillo rose to even greater heights with his own company, which has brought many new creative ideas to the dance of Spain, and which he has toured the world with great success specially in the Antipodes. Teresa virtually had one number, *Nobleza Flamenca,* with the Greco show. In this solo it became obvious that she is the kind of dancer who needs a partner, someone she can dance 'to' so that there is an interplay of steps and emotions. Either her years of not dancing much or just the fact that America has left its mark on her, have given her work a certain brassiness that I cannot remember seeing before. Much of what she did in this solo smacked of Luisillo's choreography and she still has technique but I looked in vain for the Teresa who won our hearts over a decade ago.

A dancer with a more classical style is José Molina, a handsome boy who looks as though he comes from one of the Latin American states. He has elevation and a decided personality but in common with many Spanish dancers he lacks *plié*. With greater classical training he could possibly one day approach the class of an Alberto Lorca. A pair called the 'Bronze Gypsies' (Gitanillo Heredia and Maribel De Cirez) and Rosaria Caro completed the cast of soloists and although they provided a lot of noise, stamping and falling hair, they were very run-of-the-mill and like a hundred other similar dancers that can be seen in cellars and taverns throughout Spain. Two lady singers shall be nameless because on the night I went they also appeared to be voiceless — they opened and shut their mouths, the orchestra blared out and not a word of any language could be heard.

I hope it is not too late for Greco to reconsider his whole approach to Spanish dance in the theatre and sacrifice some of the speed and slickness for just one glass of real *manzanilla* — and say goodbye to Broadway.

FIESTA DE CREPUSCULO : *One of the many numbers in Greco's programme featured a young dancer, Jose Molina. He is seen centre, in the above picture, surrounded by members of the* corps de ballet. *He is also seen in the picture below with Teresa, (in the foreground). Teresa is well known to London, she used to appear with Luisillo.*

## THE ROYAL BALLET
## at Covent Garden
### Fonteyn assoluta

SUSPEND your disbelief, for I am going to write something, on the face of it, unlikely and sounding like convenient gush. Margot Fonteyn, when she returned for the last weeks of the Covent Garden season, was, I think, dancing better than ever before. This surprised me, not because I was rash enough to regard her art as so perfect that it was incapable of any improvement, but because I felt that she personally had come to the end of the line of her development. I thought that in her first performances of *Ondine* she had reached her peak, and while elsewhere there seemed no discernible falling-off, nor were there any signs of the gradual yet consistent improvement that has been such an incredible feature of her career since 1948. It seemed to me that she had reached her top and was going to stay there for a while before either retiring or declining gracefully.

Now it looks as though I was wrong, although how long she can keep on going up and up is still anyone's guess. On June 5 she appeared in *Symphonic Variations* and *Daphnis and Chloë*. This was one of the first of her new "special-price" performances, and the audience, to be honest, had something of the sleek and glassy look of the people who customarily turn up for La Callas. Yet there was nothing sleek and glassy about La Fonteyn, who was vibrant with vitality and danced with an inevitable simplicity that was heartbreakingly beautiful. In *Symphonic Variations* she seemed a sort of elemental, natural force. There is a truth inherent in every cliché, and that night she made sense out of that tired phrase "the poetry of movement".

Her dancing was perfectly proportioned and interwoven with the music. It had the perfection that always comes with balance and completeness; the geometrical perfection of circles and traversing arcs. Such physical order and symmetry could perhaps be marble-cold, and it is Fonteyn's particular triumph in this ballet that she projects a character, or a personality, that is warm and real. She moves like a goddess, she almost conveys the music of the spheres, yet we also see a woman full of reticent passion, full of love, trust and courage.

As if inspired by Fonteyn, the rest of the cast also excelled themselves. Annette Page and Rosemary Lindsay danced with a sweet, unforce precision, gently underlining the ballet's mystery. Michael Somes, eloquently musical, suported Fonteyn as gallantly as ever, while Shaw, completely recovering the form he had before his foot injury at the beginning of the season, danced with impetuous ardour, and was in perfect harmony with a carefully disciplined Pirmin Trecu.

Like *Symphonic Variations, Daphnis and Chloë* also brought its fresh rewards. Fonteyn's Chloë has grown richer with the years, and is now the portrait full of light and shade, in which the dancing is so completely an expression of character it is scarcely dancing at all, but a special kind of acting. Here again the rest of the cast, including Somes, Farron, Hynd and Grant, combined to place this like the earlier ballet among the most memorable performances I have ever seen at the Opera House. French guest conductor, Robert Blot, also took his share of the laurels.

On June 15, Fonteyn and Somes appeared in *Giselle*, and once again Fonteyn seemed to have deepened her portrayal, and yet here, to my mind not with complete success. It was an interpretation more perfect in its parts than as a whole. For example, at the beginning she achieved a quite fresh naturalism, but later incongruously danced the big interpolated variation with all the supreme bravura of a *ballerina assoluta*. Similarly her Mad Scene was wonderfully naturalistic, painful in its superbly observed detail, yet it ended with a stylised death fall, in its way as eloquent as what had gone before yet conceived in a quite different convention. The second act, like the first, showed a considerable amount of re-thinking and re-working, but once again it came within an ace of success yet just missed the mark. I have a feeling that to be regarded as a great Giselle is to Fonteyn what a four-minute mile might be to a runner. On no other rôle does she seem to have worked so hard and changed so much, but by some irony it still seems to elude her perhaps—and I am guessing wildly — because her efforts have been so conscious. Somes, luckier in this than his ballerina, has managed to add consistently to the stature of his Albrecht, which is now among the finest portrayals of the part in our time.

At the earlier Fontevn performance *The Shadow* was revived after an absence of some time. Beriosova and Chatfield were as excellent as ever, and the performance was also particularly notable for the superlative dancing of Merle Park appearing in the Lindsey rôle for the first time. Peter Clegg, Graham Usher and Petrus Bosman danced with buoyant gusto as her lovers.

It was also Beriosova and Chatfield who danced in *The Lady and the Fool* on June 15, a fine all-round performance which had a peculiar poignancy as marking the last appearance of Chatfield with the company. It was a performance in every way worthy of the occasion, and it was pleasant to see Chatfield take his final bow after giving what could be called, without any trace of sentimentality, one of the peak appearances of his very distinguished career.

**C.B.**

## THE ROYAL BALLET
## at The Granada, Sutton
### Identical Twins ?

THE posters advertising the Royal Ballet's season at the Granada, Sutton, during the week of June 15, made no bones about it — "Direct from Covent Garden" they said. Let me be equally frank: if some of the performances I saw at Sutton *had* been given at Covent Garden I would have been shocked out of my wits. However we must also be realistic. This company may have come "direct from Covent Garden" to Sutton, but in between engagements they had undertaken a long and arduous tour of Australia during which they had lost at least half a dozen of their senior soloists, and there had been no time to find replacements. No company could be expected to be at its best in such circumstances. Yet the fact remains that the performances I saw, while probably creditable in these circumstances, were not in my opinion worthy of Covent Garden's Royal Ballet. I can well understand that perhaps I caught the company in an awkward moment of transition. In two months' time when the whole position of the *complete* company is reconsidered it may well be possible for it to give two performances of substantially equal merit at different centres on the same night. All I can say is that that did not seem to be the case during this particular week.

However, while these performances may not have been of the highest standard, there was still plenty to interest the traveller from London. On June 17 I saw two performances of the full length *Swan Lake*. Basically I think it is a mistake to imagine that a production designed for the stage of the Royal Opera House — not a very good production at that — would be suitable for presentation, with cut down numbers, in a suburban cinema. It would have been far more sensible to have devised a completely different production that could be suitable for touring.

In the afternoon the rôles of Odette/Odile and Siegfried were taken by Svetlana Beriosova and Donald MacLeary, dancing together for the first time. It proved a marvellously successful experiment, and I felt privileged to be at the birth of what I think could well become one of the most distinguished ballet partnerships of our time. MacLeary partnered Beriosova, even at this first attempt, better than any of his predecessors. In fact, I am not at all sure that taken by and large it was not the best *technical* exhibition of partnering I have ever seen from a Royal Ballet dancer. He lifted her at arm's length, she was able to do more supported *pirouettes* and finger turns than ever before, he seemed to anticipate instinctively her every need. Beriosova after a somewhat expressionless first *adagio* settled down to give the most relaxed and confident performance of the dual rôle I have ever seen from her. There was already a certain amount of *rapport* between the two, but this is clearly something which needs to develop. MacLeary's acting still leaves a lot to be desired, but it was a great deal more assured than his first Covent Garden attempt — no longer, for example, did he spend most of the first act crossing and uncrossing his arms. His dancing had plenty of attack and elegance — yes, perhaps still a little *too* much elegance — but considering his youth he was remarkably impressive.

The evening performance turned out no less interesting, with Annette Page and Ronald Hynd giving their first ever performances of Odette/Odile and Siegfried. If anything it was a better début than their earlier successful first attempt in *The Sleeping Beauty*. Page gave a surprisingly finished performance, and I fancy no one, not knowing, would have guessed it to be her début. She has made great strides this season and is now a dancer of taste and sensibility. While this was a performance of quality by any standards, at the moment it lacks something both in radiance and perhaps even individuality.

Strangely enough both of these qualities are shown abundantly by her partner Ronald Hynd. He has something of the magnetic stage personality of a Helpmann or a Massine. He acts these cardboard princes with intense conviction, making his presence felt with every gesture. His partnering looked safer than I have ever seen it, and he has the old Helpmann trick of persuading you that his dancing is really a

lot better than you know it to be. Not that he had to persuade anyone about the quality of his jumps in the Black Swan, and all the time he used his technique to its very best advantage.

In both performances of *Swan Lake* the playing of the principal rôles could be compared favourably with the Covent Garden average, but the dancing of the rest of the company was an entirely different story. The *Pas de Trois* was danced in the afternoon by Elaine Thomas, He'en Starr and Michael Boulton, and in the evening by Elizabeth Anderton, Audrey Farriss and Donald Britton, and it was only really the last-named who was in any way outstanding. Boulton looked slightly off-form, and while the four girls were completely adequate, not one of them made me want to wave paper flags, although I could believe that any of them might prove a lot better in the more helpful conditions of Covent Garden.

Easily the most interesting in the various *pas de six* casts was a newcomer Robert Mead, who shows every sign of becoming a first rate dancer. Here and there a Legerton, Mossford or Bennett popped up to give the proceedings a touch of the maturity they otherwise so badly needed, and Farriss and Britton produced an attractive Neapolitan Dance.

### The Deserving Poor

AFTER the week had opened with four performances of *Swan Lake*, it continued with four performances of repertory ballets, and I could not help noticing that these one act pieces seemed to have become the poor relations of the repertory. Audiences were apparently sparser and the public reaction seemed thinner than for *Swan Lake*. Yet, for my part, I felt that these programmes showed the Royal Ballet to far greater advantage. The repertory consisted of *Les Patineurs* and *Solitaire*, with *The Burrow* and the *Aurora Pas de Deux* for the first two performances, being replaced by *A Blue Rose* and the *Don Quixote Pas de Deux* on the Saturday.

*Les Patineurs* came over moderately well with Michael Boulton dancing crisply as the Blue Boy. Pamela Moncur and Elizabeth Anderton were effective Blue Girls, and Susan Alexander, partnered by Alexander Bennett, was particularly good as the White Skater. The *corps de ballet*, who on the whole tended to overplay the comedy, were as variable in quality as they were in size, but I noticed that Alan Beale was dancing well.

It was pleasant to see *Solitaire* restored to the company for which it was created (if you see what I mean) the more so because they use the original setting instead of the inferior one made for Covent Garden, and Boulton and Britton are still there to dance irresistibly the rôles in which they have so far proved irreplaceable. But alas there was no Margaret Hill or Sara Neil to make the ballet complete. On the Friday evening Susan Alexander danced the Hill rôle with efficiency but no great measure of charm. I preferred Elizabeth Anderton who took the part over at the Saturday matinee, and gave it something of its original air of wonderment. Elaine Thomas made a brave try at Neil's original "polka dot", yet missed its jazzy sophistication. The *corps de ballet* looked as though it needed more rehearsal, and the orchestra sounded that way too.

MacMillan's essay in claustrophobia, and oppression, emerged surprisingly well on the Friday night. I say surprisingly because Anne Heaton, Edward Miller and Lynn Seymour were all missing from the cast of rat-hole denizens. Audrey Farriss was not nearly neurotic enough in her approach to Heaton's part of the Woman, and her performance — I believe it was a first try — lacked emotional overtones. David Howard's cringing and self-pitying Outcast proved technically well acted, and his laughter at the end of the ballet, when the tables are turned on the oppressive Joker, was cleverly done, yet for all that he looked miscast, and nowhere did he achieve the desolate agony of Miller. Elaine Thomas, dancing with Donald MacLeary, did not make a great deal of Seymour's part. That the ballet succeeded as well it did was partly due to the efforts of Britton as the Joker, and even more to the intrinsic qualities of the work.

Although it was highly creditable for a first ballet, Peter Wright's *A Blue Rose* is a slight work, almost trivial. This balletic bowdlerisation of the *La Ronde* theme is an unpretentious piece of craftsmanship that only shows Wright's still untested promise — when, incidentally, is he to get a further shot at making a ballet? — yet it has worn quite well and clearly suits the company. As in the rest of the repertory it has been overtaken by a number of cast changes, and once more these are somewhat to the work's detriment. Simon Mottram made a gauche attempt at Edward Miller's part in the Waltz, and Noreen Sopwith missed the appealing brightness of Patricia Cox's Two-Step girl. Nor was Elizabeth Anderton as successful as Susan Alexander in the teasing Schottische. The best performances in the ballet remain those of Anne Heaton and Donald MacLeary, and it is this sentimental episode — more like Noel Coward's *Brief Encounter* than *La Ronde* — where a wife resignedly rejects a lover to return to her husband, that gives the clearest indication here of Wright's future possibilities.

*CZERNY BALLET REVIVED : A group from the revival of Frank Staff's* Czernyana *by Ballet Rambert. This brilliant and witty work was the first to use the piano studies of Czerny, a later creation by Harald Lander in* Etudes *also used this composer's music, and its revival proved so popular that it should never be dropped from the British repertory again.* *Photo : Terence Le Goubin.*

The two *pas de deux* fillers on each programme could hardly have varied more in quality of performance — one was excellent, while the other, to be kind, was not. Anya Linden and Bryan Ashbridge gave the worst performance of the *Aurora pas de deux*, and I am sorry to be categoric about this, I have ever seen. Linden, who only a few weeks before moved me so much in *Giselle*, danced in a way that could really only be described as clumsy and inept. Ashbridge danced gallantly, in fact with rather more freedom than at Covent Garden, yet his partnering, usually as sound as the Rock of Gibraltar, on this occasion seemed all at sea. Their performance got just the faint-hearted reception from the audience which it deserved, and even if it was one of those jinx nights when nothing went their way, they nevertheless should have put up a better showing than this. Incidentally, while I did not see it for myself, reliable friends tell me that they both did a good full-length *Swan Lake* earlier in the week.

**C.B.**

**(To be continued next month)**

## BALLET RAMBERT at Sadler's Wells

### Necessary Czerny

THE second week of the recent season by the Ballet Rambert at the Sadler's Wells Theatre brought nearly as many good things as the first, which was reviewed last month. One particularly bright offering was the revival on June 1 of Frank Staff's marvellous satire *Czernyana* after far too long an absence from the repertory.

*Czernyana* was first produced by the Ballet Rambert on December 5, 1939, and

its success was such that a second ballet called *Czerny 2* was presented on May 15, 1941. When the original ballet was revived by the company in 1943 a few of the dances were omitted being replaced by dances from its successor *Czerny 2*. It is this last version of *Czernyana* which has been revived now by Elisabeth Schooling. It is a ballet like no other in the repertory although superficially I suppose it bears some resemblance to *Les Rendezvous*. It was South African choreographer Frank Staff's first full-scale work—although earlier he had produced a revised version of *The Tartans* and *La Péri*—and was created when he was only 21.

Staff was an astonishingly versatile dancer, and had the making of either a first-class *danseur noble* or else a character dancer. As a choreographer he had a wonderful richness of pure invention, which in British ballet has only been equalled by Ashton and MacMillan. He created one master work, *Enigma Variations*, two excellent light ballets, *Czernyana* and *Peter and the Wolf*, and a number of lesser ballets, the least of which has the advantage of a personal signature. For the last six or seven years he has been teaching in South Africa. There were a variety of reasons why he never really attained the eminence either as a choreographer or dancer that his talents deserved, but looking back it seems only tragic that his abilities were so neglected and eventually so wasted.

If *Czernyana* is to be the only ballet of his to find a permanent place in the British repertory, there will be a certain rough irony in it, for it shows the young Staff with uninhibited gusto and diabolical cleverness poking gentle fun at the choreographers of his period. The delight of this parody has not become dimmed by time for Staff was always skilful at making his burlesques funny in themselves — although, of course, they were doubly funny if you knew what he was taking off. A splendid example of this comes in the number "Trop Symphonique" where he reduces Massine's symphonic ballets to their ultimate pitch of absurdity. This episode is joyously funny for its own sake, yet at the same time no one could ever feel quite the same about *Les Présages* and *Choreartium* again.

The ballet has no real structure but is rather a rag-bag of revue items or charades, a series of wickedly clever choreographic sketches strung together with no rhyme but plenty of reason. As you would expect it is not a completely even ballet. yet Staff's high spirits prevent it ever from becoming boring. The décor by Eve Swinstead-Smith is the least satisfactory part of the ballet — it now looks like a modish window display.

The present Rambert company appears to be in a transitional stage — it lacks the weight of a large body of mature artists at its top, yet the general level of accomplishment is higher than in the past, there is plenty of as yet unlicked promise throughout the company. As a result while the Tudor repertory is not at its best, works like *Czernyana* — and for that matter *Coppélia* — come over with engaging vitality.

Lucette Aldous danced "M'as-tu Vue!" with just the right air of coy assurance, equally good was Elsa Recagno in that devastated mockery of a dancing-school solo "Presque Classique". Kenneth Bannerman and Christopher Lyall excelled in the loping leaps of that divided dance, left out of most recent revivals of the ballet, "Variation Partagée," and Thelma Litster, Jennifer Dodd and John O'Brien looked perky and pawky in the gentle take-off of the pas de trois from *Les Rendezvous*. Norman Morrice seemed suitably bewildered as the boy in "Visions," and both Jennifer Kelly and, later, Jennifer Dodd floated attractively in the romantically Howard-like "Nuages". The principal male part — the Anglo-Saxon dago of "Se Habla Espagnol" and the martyred hero of "Trop Symphonique" — was given by both John Chesworth and Kenneth Bannerman. Although Bannerman probably danced better and even, in a way, acted better, Chesworth with his greater style and experience gave a far more complete performance.

### . . . and the rest

THE two remaining offerings of the season were John Cranko's *Variations on a Theme* and Fokine's *Les Sylphides*. Cranko's ballet has not worn especially well, and this I think is due to the way it is now danced and produced. This story of a young man who trifles with experience and eventually comes to seek salvation through innocence made a powerful impact when first produced in 1954. But no one has been found to replace Alexander Bennett in the principal rôle, and nearly all the other parts are given with less understanding than previously. The decaying no-man's-land created by Kenneth Rowell for the ballet's setting is now so harshly lit that the crepuscular nightmare originally suggested is quite lost, and the set looks merely tatty and meaningless. The bad lighting also detracts greatly from episodes such as the "Lament" that once so strangely moving dance of death. This is a work which requires the immediate administration of both its choreographer and its designer if is to regain its rightful place in the permanent repertory. In fairness it must be remembered that this ballet, like the Tudor works, is at present a "London-only" presentation, and obviously the expense and difficulties of adequate rehearsal must be borne in mind.

It is perhaps curious that whereas the Rambert production of *Giselle* has become world-famous, and not the least for its second act, its production of *Les Sylphides*, while usually adequate, has never been on anything like the same level. Although as productions of the ballet go, it goes, it has never really borne the Rambert hallmark. During the present season Lucette Aldous danced a musical if somewhat hard-toned Waltz, Beryl Goldwyn, perhaps in manner more "La Sylphide" than her plural sisters, was perfectly adequate in the Mazurka as was Gillian Martlew in the Prelude. Christopher Lyall, still gauche yet with more than a promise of future elegance, looked a lot more impressive than he had on his début as Albrecht.

The general impression left by this all too brief season was a good one, in fact the Rambert is as alive and kicking as ever, and the presence of Norman Morrice with the company — he is now called, I note, its "resident choreographer" — is its best insurance policy for the future. Yet it must be faced that a ballet company cannot today be expected to maintain its standards continually on a shoestring budget. Quite a lot of the ballets would have been better with a little more rehearsal, not all of the décors and costumes are in their first flush of youth, and a few are well past their prime. The company clearly is doing the best it can on its very limited financial resources, and the only answer is for these resources to be vastly improved. The Arts Council has many cares and many worries, yet I cannot but wonder if it really appreciates the plight of the Ballet Rambert. Because it has always struggled on, everyone seems to assume that it always can struggle on. Perhaps it would be an idea if it took a leaf out of the Sadler's Wells Opera's book and announced its imminent demise, so forcing public opinion to do something about it. But it would be a step in the right direction if every reader of this magazine who felt strongly about the Ballet Rambert and its future took the practical step of writing to his M.P. about it. **C.B.**

## LA REJA — DECOR

*continued from page 10*

CRANKO is a past master at unearthing designers and bringing them into the theatre. His recent discovery, Carl Toms, is a promising addition to this formidable list. In fact it is he who supplies most of the decadence of the *Majos y Majas* (Spanish aristocrats) which is presumably what Cranko intended to convey in this curiously uneven work. I don't know whose fault it was but the actual location of the ballet is a little hard to determine — at first it seems to be a brothel then it appears to be nothing more than a girls' seminary, a kind of Madrilene *Graduation Ball*. This shock *manqué* throws the whole work out of balance and the designer's conception cannot help but topple with it, yet I would say that he had admirably realised all that he was asked to do. His prison-like room with the grille (from which the ballet takes its title) in the centre back and dominating the whole scene, is achieved with great simplicity. Were he not too young to know about such things, I would think that he had been strongly influenced by Claude Lovat Fraser whose settings for *The Beggar's Opera* and other Lyric Hammersmith masterpieces this most strongly resembles. But we can always do with another Lovat Fraser who, during his sadly cut short life, brought a most distinguished and original approach to our theatres and whose work has been sloppily copied by almost every 'Little' theatre company ever since.

There is nothing sloppy about Carl Toms' work. His setting is in tones of grey only relieved by a brilliant red hanging behind the grille and a line of red pennants suspended from the ceiling. Against this the aristocrats form fascinating black silhouettes —in costumes which lie somewhere between Goya and Guardi. I could not see quite why these people all had to be masked, though some sharp pointed Commedia dell'Arte Callot-like profiles certainly gave an effective and slightly sinister frame to the more colourful dancers. The three principals are in mauve, red and pink while the *corps* girls are in white; in all these costumes there is a certain amount of decoration principally in black. My one quibble with them is that they appeared to be too short and if indeed this was a seminary they appeared to be far too sophisticated. Surely girls in such a strict and enclosed establishment would wear very simple and uncluttered dresses ? So possibly my first guess was right and it was indeed a brothel. The lighting, particularly in the work's opening moments was good and the silhouettes of the figures preparing for the occasion started it all off on a highly promising note.

Until we have seen more of this designer's work for ballet it is hard to pass fair judgement on his capabilities but he seems to have made a very auspicious start.

**Peter Williams.**

# Ballet Dates

## THE ROYAL BALLET
### at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden

August
17 *The Lady and the Fool, The Burrow, Mam'zelle Angot*
18 *A Blue Rose, The Firebird, Pineapple Poll*
19 *Pineapple Poll, Rinaldo and Armida, Ballet Imperial*
20 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
21 *Mam'zelle Angot, The Burrow, The Firebird*
22 (*M*) *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Linden, Ashbridge)
22 (E) *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Blair)
24 *A Blue Rose, Blood Wedding, Ballet Imperial*
25 *Ballet Imperial, The Burrow, Mam'zelle Angot*
26 *Sylvia* (Nerina, Blair)
27 *Blood Wedding, Rinaldo and Armida, Pineapple Poll*
28 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
29 (*M*) *Sylvia* (Linden, Blair)
29 (E) *Sylvia* (Fonteyn, Somes)
31 *The Rake's Progress, Rinaldo and Armida, The Firebird*

September
1 *Les Rendezvous, Blood Wedding, Ballet Imperial*
2 *The Rake's Progress, La Belle Dame sans Merci* (1st perf. of Andree Howard ballet with Lynn Seymour and Donald MacLeary), *Les Rendezvous*
3 *Sylvia* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
4 *Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
5 (M) *Coppelia* (Park, Burne), *Facade*
5 (E) *Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
7 *The Rake's Progress, La Belle Dame sans Merci, The Lady and the Fool*
8 *The Lady and the Fool, La Belle Dame sans Merci, Les Rendezvous*
9 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, MacLeary)
10 *Ondine* (Fonteyn, Somes)
11 *Coppelia* (Nerina, Blair), *Facade*
12 (*M*) *Coppelia* (*Sibley, Usher*), *Facade*
12 (E) *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Fonteyn, Somes) (End of joint season by the two Royal Ballet companies)

## AUTUMN TOURS

September
14 The Hippodrome, Golder's Green (2 weeks)
28 The Streatham Hill Theatre, Streatham Hill (2 weeks)

## THE ROYAL BALLET (TOURING CO.)

September
14 The Grand Theatre, Leeds
21 The Theatre Royal, Newcastle
28 The Lyceum, Sheffield

October
5 The Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool
12 King's Theatre, Glasgow
19 His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen
26 King's Theatre, Edinburgh

## LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET
### at the Royal Festival Hall, London, July 12 to September 12

July
15-18 *Les Sylphides, London Morning, Grand Pas de Deux, Prince Igor*
20, 21 *Swan Lake* (Act 2), *London Morning, Etudes*
22-27 *Swan Lake* (Act 2), *London Morning Grand Pas de Deux, Symphony for Fun*
28-Aug. 1 *Napoli, London Morning, Graduation Ball*

August
3-5 *Les Sylphides, London Morning, Grand Pas de Deux, Prince Igor*
6, 7 *Swan Lake* (Act 2), *London Morning Etudes*
8 *Swan Lake* (Act 2), *London Morning, Graduation Ball*

**Mats. Wed. and Sat. at 2.30 p.m. For further programmes see daily press.**

## BALLET RAMBERT

August
18-23 Baalbek Festival, Lebanon

October
5 The Lyceum Theatre, Newport
19 The Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton

November
2 The Arts Theatre, Cambridge

December
7 Theatre Royal, Nottingham

## JEROME ROBBINS' BALLETS U.S.A.

**Sept. 14 at a London theatre yet to be specified. See daily press**

## BALLET EXHIBITION

**at the Army & Navy Stores, Victoria Street, London. July 30-August 21.**

## INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVALS

**The following have already announced that there will be ballet in their festivals. Details to be published when available.**

DUBROVNIK: July 1-Aug. Yugoslav Folklore Groups
HINTLESHAM (Norfolk): July 11-26. New Ballet by Jack Carter (July 24, 25)
BREGENZ: July 21-Aug. 19. The Vienna State Opera Ballet in *Don Juan, Medusa* and other works
SANTANDER: July 25-Aug. 31. Ballet of the Paris Opera, Ballet Espagnol, Coros Y Danzas, a Flamenco group from Andalusia
ATHENS: Aug. 1-Sep. 15. Martha Graham and her company in *Clytemnestra* and Jerome Robbins' Ballets U.S.A.
EDINBURGH: Aug. 23-Sept. 12. At the Empire Theatre Aug. 23-29, Les Ballets Jean Babilee. Aug. 30-Sep. 5, National Ballet of Finland. Sept. 6-12, Jerome Robbins' Ballets U.S.A.
BERLIN: Sept. 20-Oct. 6. Ballet of the Berlin State Opera in *Undine* and *Schwarze Sonne*, Jerome Robbins' Ballets U.S.A.

## COVER STORIES

**This month's front cover, by Mike Davis, is of John Gilpin and Jeanette Minty of London's Festival Ballet in *London Morning*.**

GILPIN was born in Southsea and was first taught in that city at the Tina Pearce School. In 1940 he was awarded a scholarship to the Cone-Ripman School and as well as training to become a dancer he trained to become a straight actor. As a child actor he appeared in a number of West End plays as well as films. In 1945 he joined Ballet Rambert and immediately took over important roles. After a tour with Rambert in Australia, Gilpin joined Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris, later Le Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas. In 1950 he became a principal male dancer of Festival Ballet on its formation and he has remained with it ever since rising to become one of the foremost male dancers in the world.

MINTY was born in Wood Green, London. At an early age she went to dancing classes in that neighbourhood. Her first company of importance was Mona Inglesby's International Ballet and she remained with that company for several years appearing in solo roles. In 1953 she joined Festival Ballet and shortly after that married the dancer Peter White, whom she had met in her previous company. After several years of dancing soloist roles with distinction, Jeanette Minty has now taken over many principal roles with ever growing success.


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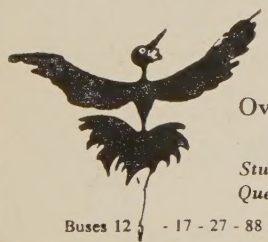

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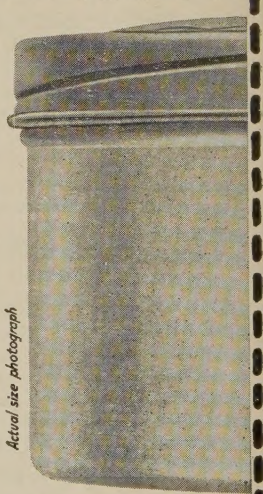


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